

Pam. N. Amer.

Asiatic Immigrants

The Anti-Japanese Pogrom

Facts versus the Falsehoods of Senator Phelan and Others

By Colonel John P. Irish

Let it be repeated that the present anti-Japanese agitation, like the anti-Chinese movement of years ago, has the same psychology as the Russian anti-Jewish pogrom, which always starts with the lie that Jews have murdered Christian children to use their blood in the rites of the Synagogue. The leader of the anti-Japanese pogrom is Senator Phelan. An election is approaching. He has made no record of any benefit to the state in the Senate; so he must divert attention from his uselessness as a senator by attacking the Japanese and trying to stampede the state by lying about them.

It is my purpose to take up his public statements and those of his helpers in this ignoble work, and prove them false, not by my word, but by official and other indisputable authority.

Senator Phelan began his pogrom by publishing that an American company had sold to Japanese 800,000 acres of land on the Mexican side of the Imperial Valley.

The American company at once proved this

to be a lie. It had not sold land anywhere to Japanese.

Mr. Phelan then changed his statement and charged that the Mexican government had sold 800,000 acres of land adjoining our boundary to Japanese, and that this was a violation of the Monroe Doctrine!

The Mexican government immediately replied with proof that it had not sold land anywhere to Japanese, and as Senator Phelan had claimed that under the Monroe Doctrine the United States can dictate to the states of Central and South America what private parties may own land in their jurisdiction, President Carranza very promptly and properly repudiated the Monroe Doctrine.

In November, Mr. Phelan published in the Chico "Enterprise" that he had been approached by a Japanese who presented a letter from our Ambassador to Tokio, and who proposed that we should surrender the whole Imperial Valley to the Japanese.

But the Senator had furnished a clue to test the truth of the story by naming a letter from our Ambassador, and soon changed the story, and in its new form it was published in the "California Cultivator" of January 31, 1920, as follows:

"When I left Washington an American representing powerful Japanese organizations said to be backed by the Japanese government, proposed that Americans be ousted from the Imperial Valley and it be turned over to the Japanese."

Notice that in this last version no names are mentioned, and no clue given, not even finger marks. As no Japanese and no American can be thought of to be fool enough to go to Mr. Phelan with such an idiotic proposition, the statement has the face of a lie in both versions.

In November he made a speech to the Chamber of Commerce of Oakland. After some vagrant vituperation of the Japanese, he ventured upon a specific statement to call attention to the "horrible condition of Merced County, overrun by Japanese who own there

5000 acres of the best farm land in the county."

I immediately wrote to the Recorder of Merced County to let me know the acreage owned by Japanese. In reply he sent me the 1919 report of the County Assessor, just made to the State Controller. The Assessor says there are 185 Japanese in Merced County. They own 395 acres of farm land and 36 town lots. There are 27 Japanese children in the primary schools and two in the high school. The white neighbors of the Japanese all say they are good people to do business with, and unobjectionable.

On the 18th of last December Mr. Phelan made an anti-Japanese speech to the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, in which he said that Japanese births in California were three to one white birth.

The official report of the State Board of Health, sent to me by Mr. Ross, Registrar of Vital Statistics, shows for 1919:

White births.....50,898

Japanese births..... 4,378

The records of the Board of Health show more white births in the single year 1919 than Japanese births in the full ten years preceding. His speech on that occasion strung other lies on this birth rate lie, like beads on a string.

In their statements made to the Committee on Immigration of the United States Senate, both Senator Phelan and Mr. McClatchy said that there were in California 20,000 picture brides and that "they usually each give birth to a child once a year." The official report of the California Board of Health for 1919 records 4378 Japanese births in the state for that year. So that of the imaginary picture brides, 20,000 in number, reported by Phelan and McClatchy, more than 16,000 must have been asleep at the switch.

After Governor Stephens refused to call an extra session of the Legislature to pass anti-Japanese laws, Phelan said in Washington that the Governor had received a letter from the Japanese Association warmly thanking him for his refusal, and Phelan published the letter.

I wrote the Governor's office asking if he had received such a letter. The answer was: "Phelan's statement is an absolute lie."

There are men in San Francisco who know the inside facts about this little comedy. When those facts are made public, as they undoubtedly will be, the Senator will have to face an embarrassing situation. In the meantime, it is sufficient to say that the Governor never received the letter.

Recently a questionable item in a naval appropriation bill was before the Senate. Mr. Phelan demanded its passage as necessary to the defense of this coast, for he said, "the largest Japanese warship lies in the harbor of Honolulu."

A few days later the Associated Press published from its agent in Honolulu that no Japanese warship was in Hawaiian waters, nor had been for a long time. Commenting on this, the New York "Sun" said maybe Senator Phelan does not know where Hawaii is!

The Senator has uttered other defamatory statements, and every one is a lie. They are as thick in his record as cooties in a battle trench. I leave him now to attend to the cases of his companions in falsehood and exaggeration.

I dislike to say that Mr. V. S. McClatchy, of the Sacramento "Bee," intentionally lies, but his bitter prejudice and hatred have fed his credulity until he has become a "carrier" of falsehoods, as some people are "carriers" of typhoid. Mr. McClatchy has published that during the twelve months ending June 30, 1919, 9678 Japanese were found to be illegally in this country and were arrested and deported.

Now the official report of the Commissioner of Immigration shows nine Japanese deported for being illegally in the country, in the year ending June 30, 1918.

The Commissioner's report for the next year, ending June 30, 1919, shows 117 contraband Japanese were apprehended and deported. So for the full year covered by Mr. McClatchy's statement, the official report

shows only 126 Japanese illegally in the country and deported. I wrote the Commissioner General of Immigration asking the foundation for Mr. McClatchy's statement, and that official seems to think that his official report, above quoted, is sufficient answer. The circumstantial evidence is against the truth of McClatchy's figures, since the arrest of so large a number could not have escaped the notice of the newspapers and of the Japanese Consul. Mr. McClatchy follows his apocryphal figures with the statement that "No account is taken of the picture brides who arrived." This is not true. They all had to land at the Immigration Station and be registered, undergo a physical examination, and their names and those of their husbands recorded.

In Mr. McClatchy's statement to the Immigration Section of the Commonwealth Club he said the Japanese on landing at first drive white labor out by working for low wages and then proceed to conquer everything. This statement is not true. I am a farmer and know, as do all farmers, there was no white labor to drive out. Instead of working for low wages, the Japanese in California are paid the highest farm wages in the world, and they are the most industrious and skillful land people in the state.

The glaring falsehoods of Honorable John S. Chambers I have already answered. The lies in the newspapers are too numerous to mention. One in the "Call" may suffice. That paper, under infuriating headlines, published that Japanese stevedores in loading an American cargo of vegetable oils had maliciously punched holes in the tin containers with loading hooks, and the oil leaked out, and this was done to damage American commerce. The owner of the oil in San Francisco and the officers of the ship at once exposed the story as a malicious lie, as did Lloyds, whose surveyor in Kobe watched the loading and certified to the proper condition of the cargo. Then it was shown by the same parties that Japanese stevedores use no loading hooks. But did the "Call" correct the lie? Not up to date.

Another member of Phelan's pogrom gang publishes that Japanese have leased ten million acres of land in the Sutter Basin. Go to the maps in the office of the State Reclamation Board and you find that in the whole Sutter Basin, from the mouth of Butte Slough to the confluence of the Sacramento and Feather rivers, there are only sixty thousand acres. But people who don't know what or where Sutter Basin is, read that ten million lie and rush to join the anti-Japanese pogrom.

Senator Phelan has published a study of the "hybrids," as he calls them, half Japanese and half white children. I refuse to accept his as an expert opinion.

During the anti-Chinese pogrom there were long and hot discussions over Chinese and white hybrids, impossibility of assimilation, etc. But the multi-millionaire Chinese, Ah Fong, of Honolulu, had a bevy of charming daughters by his wife, who was half and half Portuguese and Hawaiian. The Ah Fong girls were the toast of the Pacific, beautiful and accomplished, and they all married well, to white gentlemen, several of the husbands being officers in the American army and navy.

It is demonstrated by the foregoing that politicians are trying to stampede the people of California to do an act of dishonor against an industrious, cleanly, and law-abiding people. The proposed initiative measure has to go back to the cruelties attending the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, to find an equal in cruelty, inhumanity, and dishonor. It violates our treaty with Japan and the Fourteenth Amendment to our own Constitution, and is a proper offspring of the disgraceful lies from which it comes. I stand for American honor, decency, and fair play; I stand for what is called our Christian civilization and wonder if there is enough of its spirit in California to save the honor of the state.

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